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ANGEL LILLY.

[AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHILD ANGEL.]

BY MRS. MARY A. DENISON.

ALTHOUGH a wonderful child, Lilly was by no means a grave, unearthly, precocious little one. Her smile was as sunny as her hair, and her eyes were always laughing. She was indeed a beam of light wherever seen. At sight of her lovely face the stern visages of worldly men relaxed, and the old always held open arms for her. She warmed their hearts with her happy, artless prattle. One day her mother took her on board of a steamboat, on a pleasure excursion. At first Lilly looked grave, finding herself among so many strange people, but spying at the farther end of the saloon a venerable man, who held a little girl by the hand, she begged her mother to let her go and see the rosy-cheeked child. Mrs. ——— was not afraid to trust Lilly. If she said, ‘Lilly,’ remember and do not go out of the door or by the window, she knew that she might rely upon the sweet child’s implicit obedience. So away went Lilly,

her beautiful great eyes shining, her step still rather slow, but when she got near the child she looked for a moment in her little chubby face, and smile answered smile; the two quickly understood each other, and were soon busily playing together. The old gentleman regarded them with a look of interest that was not lost upon Lilly, so by-and-bye sliding up to his knees, she asked—

‘Is that your little girl?’

‘Yes, dear,’ was the reply, ‘at least she is my little grand daughter.’

‘Are you her grandpa?’

‘Yes, dear.’

‘I got a grandpa,’ said Lilly, with that sweet coaxing way that is in some children so irresistible, ‘and he’s a good man and loves Jesus. Do you love Jesus?’

The old man looked at her with a strange expression, but did not speak.

‘Say! you love Jesus, don’t you? Don’t you love Him because He died to save you? Say, don’t you love Jesus?’

‘My little child,’ murmured the old, white-headed man, and his lips began to quiver.

She looked at him earnestly, thoughtfully—then a grieved expression crossed her sweet face, and she said, softly—‘You do love Jesus, don’t you?’

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‘My little one—ah, I wish I did—I wish I did!’ and he shook his head mournfully.

For one moment she stood gazing on the floor, then flying from the knee where she had been resting, she sought her mother, caught hold of her hand, and saying, ‘Oh! mamma, that little girl’s grandpa over there, don’t love Jesus; wont you come and tell him he must.’

The child would take no denial, but besought with such earnestness, that her mother was fain to go, and seat herself by the old man’s side, after which Lilly, feeling perfectly assured that the old man would soon love Jesus whether he had before or not, resumed her merry play with her little new-found companion.

Mrs. — sat for some time silent and embarrassed where her daughter had escorted her.

‘That’s a wonderful little one,’ said the old gentleman, after he had mastered his emotion.

‘Oh no, sir, a very pleasant, good child, but there is nothing wonderful about her,’ replied the mother.

‘Madam, pardon me—but no one ever took that much interest in me before, to ask me the simple question that child put to me, and I am now in my eighty-third year.’

‘The Bible, sir, you know, says that out of the mouths of babes and suckling God hath ordained praise.’

‘Ah! yes, I remember—I read my Bible a great deal, madam,’ and he sighed heavily.

‘And you find comfort in its truths I hope sir?’

‘No, madam. I have for many years been shaping the scriptures to suit some peculiar views of mine, and so busy and zealous have I been that I have given no attention to it, as a saving medium. When your child put that question to me, madam, I seemed suddenly to awake, as it were, out of a slumber of ages;’ and again he sighed heavily.

‘I think, sir,’ said Mrs. —, ‘if you would not disdain so humble an instrument, my little daughter, as she has perhaps begun the good work, might lead you to the truth.’

‘The boat is stopping, madam,’ said the old gentleman, then he added, eagerly, ‘will you accompany me to my home? It will be pleasanter than the hot grove, at this hour of the day, and I would talk more with that angel child.’

His new found friend consented, and they walked together, for some moments, the little children hand in hand, until they came in sight of a splendid mansion. A park, dotted with beautiful timber lay in front, and the

sun brightened its open paths, and threw threads of light in among the shadowed foliage spreading broadly over the green. This led into a garden well laid out, blooming with various flowers. The glass roof of a large conservatory glittered in the red light of that noon hour, and through its transparent windows the lemon and the orange could be seen.

They entered the house. It wore an air of grandeur, and every room was adorned with rich and costly furniture.

‘O! what a happy house!’ cried angel Lilly.

‘She means,’ said her mother, smiling, ‘that everything is so beautiful, one ought to be happy here.’

Again came that sigh welling up from the heart of the aged man, and he shook his head sadly, holding out his arms to the child.

‘Come to me, and tell me how I may love Jesus,’ he said.

‘Why, don’t you love Him yet?’ she cried, looking from him to her mother.

‘Is it so easy then, my sweet child?’

‘Why, it’s so easy you can’t help it,’ said the little one, simply. ‘Mother says she loves me dearly when I’m good, and how can you help loving Jesus who is good all the time?’

‘Do you think he loves me?’

‘O! I *know* He does,’ replied the child, earnestly.

The eyes of the aged unbeliever filled with tears, as he said, ‘Then, surely, if He loves me, who has been always so ungrateful towards Him, I ought to love Him. Thank God! I see it in a new light,’ he murmured to himself. ‘O! madam, how can I ever be thankful enough that I met this angel? Surely, if I seek Him He will be found.’

In her own sweet way the mother of little Lilly unfolded the plan of salvation to this hoary-headed sceptic—removing his impressions where they conflicted with the truth, and when she left him, he had humbled himself in prayer and promised not to give up his search till he had found the Saviour precious to his soul.

It was perhaps a week after this conversation that the mother of Lilly received a letter from the old gentleman, in which he wrote glad tidings of great joy; now he loved the Saviour.

‘Ask my little angel,’ he added, ‘what she would most like to have me buy for her. It must be something very beautiful and very costly. I am curious to know what she will say.’

‘What shall the good old man buy for you,

Lilly?' asked her mother, as she read the latter part of his letter.

'For me, mother?'

'He says he will get you whatever you wish, no matter what it costs.'

'O! mother, will he!' and Lilly clapped her hands. 'Will he buy a whole new library for our Sabbath School? O! that would be so nice!'

'Always another—never self,' thought the gratified parent, as the tears came into her eyes. Then she added aloud, 'Well, daughter, I will tell him what you want.'

Before the next Sabbath a new and beautiful library graced the Sabbath School room of L——, and Lilly's eyes sparkled like diamonds as she heard the superintendent tell that it was a gift through one of the Sabbath School scholars. Was it not strange that every eye turned toward the beaming face of angel Lilly? No; for they knew that she delighted in such deeds. And when the questions came pouring in upon her, 'Was it you? was it you?' her childish answer was—

'Yes; arn't you glad we've got such a beautiful library?'

That old man lived to build a house unto the Lord, and when it was completed, and they told him that angel Lilly lay in her

white robes, pale and motionless, his only reply was, as he wiped the tears from his furrowed cheek, and pointed to the new and elegant edifice—

‘There is her monument!’

O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

○ LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

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